

Seneca Valley High School
“Screaming Eagles”

Student-Athlete Handbook

**STUDENT – PARENT
ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION INFORMATION
Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)**

**STUDENT – PARENT
ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION INFORMATION
Seneca Valley High School Supplemental**

2011-2012

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STUDENT – PARENT ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION INFORMATION Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)

Philosophy

Interscholastic athletics supplement and support the academic mission of the school system and assist students in their growth and development. Athletics assists in promoting the importance of teamwork, effort, goals, and commitment. Interscholastic athletics is highly competitive, but winning is not the primary measure of success. Sportsmanship, respect for participants, and dignity in the face of adversity are more important than the outcome of the contest. All athletes do not perform at the same level, but all can demonstrate effort, dedication, and fair play.

Sportsmanship

An important mission of the interscholastic athletics program is to teach and reinforce values relating to sportsmanship, competition, and fair play. It is expected that team personnel, parents, and spectators respect this mission by exhibiting appropriate behavior at athletic events. Countywide team and school awards are presented annually to schools whose coaches, players, and fans, demonstrate a high degree of sportsmanship.

Student Eligibility Requirements

Students must meet the following requirements to be eligible to participate. Participation of ineligible students shall result in individual and team sanctions, including forfeits for the team.

1. All participants are required to have a valid annual medical evaluation.
2. Students must submit a current *MCPS Health Inventory Form* (MCPS Form SRS-6), a *Medical Card for Athlete* (MCPS Form 560-30) and a *Student/Parent Athletics Participation Contract* before being allowed to participate in practices or contests.
3. Students selected for a team must pay the MCPS extracurricular activities (ECA) fee. Students may not participate in contests until they have paid the activities fee.
4. Students must achieve a minimum 2.0 grade point average for the most recently completed marking period, with no more than one failing grade. Academic eligibility is determined on the date report cards are issued, and remains until the next report card is issued.
5. Students must attend all of their scheduled classes in order to participate in a practice or contest on that day. If the principal or designee grants an excused absence in advance for a prescheduled activity, or an unforeseen emergency, the student may participate on that day.
6. If during the season a student has an unexcused absence, he/she may not compete in the next contest after the violation has been verified.
7. In addition to other infractions, a student may be suspended or removed from a team for unexcused absences or chronic tardiness to classes or team practices.
8. Students who are 19 years old, or older, as of August 31 of the current school year are ineligible.
9. Students may not participate in more than one interscholastic sport in one season.
10. A student may not participate when he/she is serving an in-school or out-of-school suspension. The student becomes eligible to participate on the next school day following the suspension.
11. Students must satisfy school and school system Participation Standards.
12. Students whose legal residence is outside the designated boundary of a particular school may not participate unless they have received an official transfer and an athletic waiver.
13. Students and their parents must sign the school *Student-Parent Athletic Participation Contract and Parent Permission* form.
14. Students should refer to *A Student's Guide to Rights and Responsibilities* for additional guidelines and regulations related to eligibility.

Assumption of Risk

Participation in interscholastic athletic activities often includes intense competition and poses the potential for serious, catastrophic, or life-threatening injury. Participants and parents are urged to consider that there are inherent risks and hazards associated with athletic participation. Risks vary from sport-to-sport and can occur under direct supervision and with use of proper safety equipment.

Hazing

Hazing is prohibited at all times. Hazing involves any act that subjects teammates to mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule. In some instances hazing constitutes a criminal act. At a minimum, hazing may lead to immediate dismissal from a team.

Communication with Coaches

Parents should not attempt to address coaches immediately after games and practices. Coaches have many post game/practice responsibilities, including supervision of players. Also, the post game/practice period is often emotionally charged, and not conducive to productive discussion. If a parent feels a need to communicate a concern, the parent should contact the coach and/or athletic director to arrange a later meeting.

Participation Standards

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege. Accordingly, students must meet certain standards in order to earn the privilege of participation. At a minimum, the following standards are required of all student-athletes.

1. Exhibit public behavior that will reflect positively on the team, school, and community.
2. Exhibit responsible, respectful, and trustworthy behavior to teammates and the coach.
3. Exert efforts to maintain a high level of academic achievement.
4. Comply with all team, school, and school system rules, regulations, and policies.
5. Exhibit appropriate behavior at all team and school-related activities.
6. Attend all team functions unless ill or given prior permission to be absent by the coach.
7. Respect and comply with decisions made by the coach and athletic department.
8. Respect calls and decisions made by game officials.
9. Display good sportsmanship at all times.
10. Report to the coach any issues or developments that may affect eligibility status.

Residency

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) residency regulations require that students attend specific high schools, assigned by the school system, based on their legal residence. When a student participates at a school to which he or she is not assigned, or the home address of the student is not his or her legal residence, the student is not eligible to participate unless the student has received an official transfer, based on accurate information, and has received an athletic waiver from the Director of System-wide Athletics.

Illegal Substances/Alcohol/Tobacco/Steroids/Controlled Substances

MCPS athletic regulations state that any student-athlete with verified use, distribution, or possession of alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, and/or controlled substances on school property or at a school-sanctioned event, shall receive a minimum ten-consecutive school day suspension from all athletic activities. Participation in athletic activities will not resume until the school day following completion of the suspension. Individual schools may adopt a more-stringent regulation or penalty than that stated above.

At Seneca Valley High School if the illegal use, distribution or possession of alcohol or drugs is verified, the athlete will be subject to suspension, exclusion, police referral and expulsion. The level of disciplinary action may vary at the discretion of the administration in unusual circumstances. No school activities including athletics would be permitted while disciplinary action is being administered. For a list of specific actions that will be taken, please refer to the Seneca Valley High School Student Handbook. The Discipline Policy is provided in the front portion of this handbook

STUDENT – PARENT ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION INFORMATION

Seneca Valley High School Supplemental

Athletic Program

This section of the handbook contains Seneca Valley supplemental information rules and consequences related to participation, chronic tardiness, unexcused absences and improper behavior. At the end of this document is the Student-Parent Athletic Participation Contract and Parent Permission Form which must be completed and brought to the first day of practice.

The Athletic Department of Seneca Valley High School consists of the following sports and activities. Every student should have an opportunity to become involved in the athletic program; if not as an athlete than as a manager or a media specialist.

Fall	Winter	Spring
Cheerleaders (Co-ed V and JV)	Basketball (Boys V and JV)	Baseball (Boys V and JV)
Cross Country (Co-ed)	Basketball (Girls V and JV)	Allied Softball (Co-Ed)
Field Hockey (Girls V and JV)	Cheerleading (Co-ed V)	Lacrosse (Boys V and JV)
Football (Boys V and JV)	Indoor Track (Co-ed)	Lacrosse (Girls V and JV)
Golf (Coed)	Pompons (Girls)	Softball (Girls V and JV)
Pompons (Girls)	Swimming/Diving (Co-ed)	Tennis (Boys)
Soccer (Boys V and JV)	Wrestling (Boys V and JV)	Track and Field (Co-ed)
Soccer (Girls V and JV)	Unified Bocce Ball (Co-Ed)	Volleyball (Boys)
Tennis (Girls)		Volleyball (Co-ed)
Volleyball (Girls V and JV)		
Unified Track and Field (Co-Ed)		

Participation Standards

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege. Accordingly, students must meet certain standards to earn the privilege of participation. Failure to follow rules will lead to participation consequences.

- 1. Exhibit public behavior that will reflect positively on the team, school, and community.** Display appropriate conduct and sportsmanship at all times throughout the season, both on and off the fields, courts and track. Violations might include, though are not limited to, fighting, theft, use of improper language and misuse of school facilities and equipment.
- 2. Exhibit responsible, respectful, and trustworthy behavior to teammates and the coach.** Treat others as you would want to be treated. Hazing is prohibited at all times. Also respect the property of others at all times, in the locker rooms, both on and off the fields, courts and track. While academic eligibility rules to participate are defined by report card marking period grades, student-athletes may receive reduced participation if classroom grades slip during the marking periods.
- 3. Exert efforts to maintain a high level of academic achievement.** Participation on an athletic team and squad is defined by the marking period grades. Coaches may reduce participation based on ongoing class grades during a marking period.
- 4. Comply with all team, school, and school system rules, regulations, and policies.** Consequences for breaking school and school system rules, regulations and policies also lead to athletic participation consequences. The specific details of some team rules may vary from team to team depending on expectations in one area or another. However the basics related to being at practice on time, respect, proper behavior and sportsmanship as defined in the general rules sited on this sheet apply to all student-athletes on any team or squad.
- 5. Exhibit appropriate behavior at all team and school-related activities.** Your behavior and conduct at any event whether it is home or away reflects on the entire team, the Athletic Department, and the school, and contributes to our overall image and success.
- 6. Attend all team functions unless ill or given prior permission to be absent by the coach.** Prompt and regular attendance at practice sessions is necessary for the safety and conditioning of the student-athlete as well as for the benefit of the team. There are participation consequences for being absent or tardy.
- 7. Respect and comply with decisions made by the coach and athletic department.** These decisions are based on activities that affect the entire team, athletic program and school, governed by school, county or state rules.
- 8. Respect calls and decisions made by game officials.** Communicating with officials is reserved only to coaches. Under specified situations, defined by the head coach, communication with an official may be performed by a specified individual on the field. If this is the case the official will be notified of the individual prior to the start of the contest.
- 9. Display good sportsmanship at all times.** This applies at any event whether home or away, in the locker room and both on and off the fields, courts and track. Countywide team and school awards are presented to schools, whose coaches, players and fans demonstrate a high degree of sportsmanship.

10. Report to the coach any issues or developments that may affect eligibility status. If an ineligible student-athlete participates in a contest the school automatically forfeits the contest if the team wins. This is a state rule.

Consequences for Improper Behavior

Seneca Valley athletes and team members will be expected to display appropriate conduct and sportsmanship at all times throughout the season, both on and off the field. Specific violations might include, though are not limited to, fighting, theft, use of improper language and misuse of school facilities and equipment. Also any athlete who acts or speaks in a derogatory way on a personal website will be held to the same conduct standards as if acting in person. The conduct of individual athletes reflects on the entire team, the Athletic Department, and the school, and contributes to our overall image and success.

Unless the school specifies otherwise, the following measures will be taken for inappropriate behavior and conduct.

- 1st offense - conference between coach and team member where coach determines appropriate level of action.
- 2nd offense - minimum suspension from next session or contest.
- 3rd offense - dismissal from team.

Consequences for Chronic Tardiness and Unexcused Absences

Prompt and regular attendance at practice sessions is necessary for the safety and conditioning of the student-athlete as well as for the benefit of the team. Unexcused absences and chronic tardiness from class also affects team participation. Team members should notify their coach prior to any practice that they must miss and should offer an adequate explanation for the absence. The coach will deal with chronic tardiness or unexcused absences. Unless the school specifies otherwise, the following measures will be taken for unexcused absences.

- 1st offense - conference between coach and team member where coach determines appropriate action.
- 2nd offense - suspension from next session or contest.
- 3rd offense - potential dismissal from team.

Equipment and Responsibility for Proper Care

Uniforms and equipment are assigned to student-athletes for the duration of the season. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to maintain the uniform/equipment in the same condition in which it was received. Any damage to, or loss of uniform/equipment is considered the direct financial responsibility of the student-athlete that is responsible for its care.

Any athlete withholding property from one sport is suspended from participating in any other sport until the equipment is returned. He/she is ineligible for any sport award until that equipment is returned. Student-athletes will be charged the replacement cost of uniform/equipment not returned. Cost must be paid before participating in another sport. **All school financial obligations**, sports related or otherwise, must be settled with the finance office before a student-athlete can try out for a team or play in a contest!

Participation on Other Teams

On School Teams

Students may not participate in more than one interscholastic sport in one season. A student who participates in both varsity and junior varsity teams may not play in a number of games that exceed the maximum number allowed for a varsity team in a week or a season. A student may not compete on both varsity and junior varsity teams on the same day.

On Outside Teams

The MPSSAA (the governing body of the state athletic association) is very specific on this issue. Students, while participating on a school team, are permitted to participate in the same sport outside of school during the sports season. Such participation must meet the following criteria.

- The outside participation may not conflict with the sports schedule of the school, includes district, regional and state championship play. Sports schedule included games and practice.
- A student who elects to participate on an outside team and does not participate on the school team during the designated sports season is ineligible to represent his/her school in all meets and games that determine a county, district, regional or state championship.

Inclement Weather Procedures

Montgomery County Board of Education policy states that in the event schools are closed due to inclement weather conditions, all after-school activities are automatically canceled. These after-school activities include practices, contests and other events. Team members should make certain to contact their coach regarding interim or adjusted practice schedules.

Transportation

Some teams are transported to contest by MCPS buses, while coaches, parents, or other players drive others. Parent/guardian must sign a transportation form (MCPS Form 560-31) granting their child permission to travel to contests in the manner checked on the

form. All student-athletes on teams that take buses are expected to return to the school on the bus, unless the coach determines that the student-athlete can return with his/her parent or within the permission guidelines allowed by the sign transportation form.

Montgomery County Public Schools
STUDENT – PARENT ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION CONTRACT
and PARENT PERMISSION FORM

Student: _____ Student ID: _____

School: _____ Team: _____ School Year: _____

Parent and Student-Athlete: Review this contract carefully (front and back), complete information as requested, affix signatures, and return the completed contract/permission form to the school.

Stipulations

The student-athlete and his or her parent/guardian have received and read the *Student-Parent Athletic Participation Information*. Based on this information, the student and parent/guardian understand and stipulate to the following:

1. I/We understand the eligibility regulations required for participation and affirm that all eligibility requirements have been satisfied, including age, residence, and academics.
2. I/We understand that participation of ineligible players will result in individual and team sanctions, including forfeits for the team.
3. I/We affirm that the student will exert effort to maintain a high level of academic achievement.
4. I/We understand there is potential for serious, catastrophic, or life-threatening injury associated with participation in a sport.
5. I/we have reviewed safety and health-related information made available by the school system, including information regarding concussions, proper hydration, proper hygiene, and MRSA.
6. I/We affirm that the student will not participate in hazing at any time, of any nature.
7. I/We, as a participant or spectator, will exhibit a high level of sportsmanship at contests.
8. I/We will follow appropriate procedures in communicating concerns to coaches.
9. I/We affirm that the student will abide by all team and participation standards.
10. I/We affirm that the student will not use steroids, illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco unless medically proscribed for a specific condition or illness.

Residency Verification

Students must be legally enrolled at a high school designated by the school system based on their legal address. Please respond to the following residency questions:

A. I reside at		
_____	_____ MD _____	
<small>Street Address</small>	<small>City</small>	<small>Zip Code</small>
B. This residence is within the boundaries of _____	High School/Consortium	
C. I reside at this residence with a parent or guardian:	_____ yes	_____ no
D. My current address is the same as last year:	_____ yes	_____ no
E. I have only played at my current high school:	_____ yes	_____ no
F. I agree to notify the coach / school of any changes in residence:	_____ yes	_____ no

Permission to Participate

I/We hereby authorize and consent to our child's participation in interscholastic athletics and sports. We understand that the sport in which our child will be participating is potentially dangerous, and that physical injuries may occur to our child requiring emergency medical care and treatment. I/We assume the risk of injury to our child that may occur in an athletic activity.

In consideration of the acceptance of our child by the Montgomery County Public Schools in its athletic program, and the benefits derived by our child from participation, I/we agree to release and hold harmless the Board of Education of Montgomery County, its members, the Superintendent of Schools, the principal, all coaches, and any and all other of their agents, servants, and/or employees and agree to indemnify each of them from any claims, costs, suits, actions, judgment, and expenses arising from our child's participation in interscholastic athletics.

I/We hereby give our consent and authorize the Board of Education of Montgomery County and its agents, servants, and/or employees to consent on our behalf and on behalf of our child, to emergency medical care and treatment in the event we are unable to be notified by reasonable attempts of the need for such emergency medical care and treatment.

Each year the Board of Education makes available a Student Accident Policy at a nominal premium. This insurance is secondary to the family's own insurance. Because accidents will inevitably occur despite our best efforts to maintain a high level of safety in all student activities, this insurance coverage is recommended unless the family deems that other insurance coverage (in force) will meet the needs of the student. The Board of Education Student Accident Policy is available at the beginning and throughout the school year. The coverage may be obtained from the insurance carrier. Forms are available at the school.

I, _____, and I, _____
(parent's name) (student's name)

have carefully reviewed the *Student- Parent Athletic Participation Information* and the *Student/Parent Athletic Participation Contract and Parent Permission Form*. I/We understand the conditions for participation in the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) interscholastic athletic program, and we understand there are inherent risks associated with participation.

I/We agree as follows:

- My son/daughter has my/our permission to participate in _____
(name of sport)
at _____ High School.
- I/We understand and conform to all of the statements in the Stipulations portion of the Contract.
- I/We I have responded truthfully and accurately to the questions in the Residency portion of the Contract.

Please affix signatures below.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian Date _____ Date

Signature of Student Date

**In the event that both parents retain legal guardianship of the student, the signatures of both parents are required.*